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AUTHOR Graber, Doris A.
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ABSTRACT

How people select and process current events and political information through the media is studied. Throughout 1976, 21 adults were tested for recall of selected news stories; also, participants recorded daily three news stories that had come to their attention. Results indicated that participants totally ignored 67 percent of newspaper stories. Of the 33 percent that were noticed, less than half concerned government and politicians; other topics of interest were social problems, human interest, and economics. In general, the participants selected news stories that were interesting, simple to understand, and believable. After selection of the stories, participants employed five methods of processing or incorporating the new information into their belief systems: cause and effect sequences (a story about rising crime rates is attributed to high unemployment); behavior judgments of persons and groups who are the focus of the stories; judgments about population subgroups such as business people, ethnic groups, and students; institutional judgments; expectations based on cultural norms (e.g., democracy is the best form of government); and personal interest stories which evoke empathy. Conclusions are that the types of schemes used for processing information are limited in world perspectives but are adequate for extracting some meaning from most domestic news stories. (KC)

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HAVE I HEARD THIS BEFORE AND IS IT WORTH KNOWING? VARIATIONS IN POLITICAL INFORMATION PROCESSING

Doris A. Graber

University of Illinois at Chicago

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HAVE I HEARD THIS BEFORE AND IS IT WORTH KNOWING? VARIATIONS IN POLITICAL INFORMATION PROCESSING

Democracies operate on the assumption that their citizens keep abreast of current happenings so that they can form intelligent opinions about current events and the governmental policies required to cope with them. It is important, therefore, to know what sort of information people extract from the daily flood tide of news and how they incorporate it into their fund of knowledge of the state of their world, and its mode of operation. The research reported here seeks to assess what happens when people read their daily newspaper, listen to the news on television or radio, or discuss current events with their families, friends, and colleagues.

The Data

To find answers to this question, a small panel of people was tested for their recall of selected news stories published throughout 1976. Two-hundred seventy five of these news stories were chosen for the recall tests to reflect a diverse array of important, widely-publicized national, local, and international matters. The stories were drawn from the specific news sources to which the interviewees had been exposed. They were asked about these stories during successive interviews while the stories were either current or very recent. At most, no more than thirty days had elapsed since the story had received media coverage. We knew the content of these stories from a detailed content analysis. If our respondents remembered the story, we asked what they remembered and thought about it and why they had paid attention to it and remembered it. If they did not recall the story, we asked why they might be disinclined to pay attention to this type of information or to remember it.

We also asked people to record, in a daily diary, at least three news stories that had recently come to their attention as well as the interpersonal or media sources of the recalled information.[1] The diary yielded an average of 500 additional stories for each respondent. These stories, along with questions about political information which was not linked to specific media content, provided us with an opportunity to assess the use of non-media sources for gathering political information.

The major research technique used for the larger study from which this report is taken was in-depth interviewing. The panelists were selected from a pool of randomly chosen voters in Evanston, a medium-size city in Illinois. The initial pool of 200 was narrowed to a panel of 21, chosen with an eye to demographic diversity in age, sex, and socio-economic status.[2] While a panel of 21 adults from the same town cannot fully reflect national diversity, it is reassuring to know that our panelists' reactions to political issues closely resembled those of their counterparts in the national election surveys run by the University of Michigan.

Our panelists were interviewed ten times throughout 1976 to learn how they assessed current events. The average interview was conducted in the panelist's home and lasted approximately two hours. It was tape-recorded and yielded 1,500--2,000 statements in response to 50 to 100 questions. Most questions were open-ended and probes were used routinely to ascertain the reasons for specific answers.

Information selection and processing were studied by a two-stage analysis of the interview tapes. The first coding ascertained the substance of interview responses and the diary contents. Topics of recall, frequencies, direction and strength of opinions and the like were noted. Most of this work was done by a single coder, with reliability checks performed on 10 percent of the work. For questions

involving discretion, intercoder reliability averaged 91 percent. It did not drop below 83 percent for any single category.

The second, and more difficult coding task involved conceptual coding. Here coders were asked to infer thinking processes from the manner in which questions were answered. We checked for such matters as conceptualizations of political situations, ability to generalize and make comparisons, cause and effect linkages, rationales and rationalizations, and consistencies and inconsistencies in thought. After initial analysis had revealed that processing patterns corresponded to models developed by cognitive psychologists, we also watched for further evidence of the occurrence of the predicted patterns.

At least two trained coders subjected each interview to conceptual coding. At the start of the project, three coders were used. Ultimately, two codings were deemed sufficient since intercoder reliability rates were good --averaging 85 percent agreement on choice of statements to be coded as reflective of conceptualizations and on the selection of a specific code.[3]

To check whether the panelists had been sensitized by the repeated intensive interviews so that their responses were abnormal, we conducted periodic interviews with people from the original pool of respondents who had not been interviewed except for the original screening. We found no significant differences in the answers given by panel members and outsiders. For instance, a comparison of news story recall ability on a four point scale showed a ranking of 2.3 for panel members and 2.4 for the control group, with essentially the same kinds of stories and type of information recalled. The danger of intentional or inadvertent distortion of responses was averted partially by asking many questions in different ways over a long period of time so that systematic distortion would have been very difficult. Inadvertent distortion was minimized by testing reactions to stories in a variety of ways and by checking corresponding behaviors whenever possible. Accuracy of interview responses was further confirmed by the fact that the panelists gave very similar responses to many types of questions.

Attention Arousal

When people are exposed to information about current affairs, three types of interactions may occur. People may remain unaware of the information; they may purposely ignore the information after they have become aware of its existence; or they may pay attention to the information and absorb it in varying degrees.

The first step in acquiring information is attention arousal. People's attention to current events may take place through personal experience, through interpersonal communication, or through exposure to the mass media. Since newspapers are most people's richest source for current information, we designed two experiments to test the attention arousal process during newspaper exposure. In these experiments, we asked our panelists to run a marking pen alongside those portions of stories which caught their attention, whenever they were engaged in routine newspaper reading. Analysis of these marked papers showed that, on an average, our panelists totally ignored 67 percent of all of the stories in the paper. Some of these stories undoubtedly escaped their glance entirely. Others were probably scanned so lightly for cues that the scanning was not remembered. Such scanning seems to be akin to watching the fleeting scene from a train window and failing to record most of the images which pass in front of the eye.

Of the 33 percent of the stories that were noticed, our panelists read 18 percent completely and 15 percent partially. The range of individual selection behaviors varied from skipping 23 percent of all stories to skipping 88 percent.

Complete reading of stories ranged from 8 percent to 36 percent of all stories, and partial reading from 4 to 47 percent. During interviews it became clear that partial reading is encouraged by the inverted pyramid style used by newspapers, where the salient facts are presented in the opening paragraphs. Readers know that they can glean the essence of a story without going to the trouble of reading all of it.

Of the stories which caught our panelists' attention, less than half (43%) could be classified as news about government and politicians, with 1976 election stories rating as the most popular choice (11%). Thirty-one percent of the selected stories dealt with social problems, with street crime (8%) as the most attention-getting subject matter. Sixteen percent of noted stories concerned human interest topics, with half of them devoted to gossip about well-known persons in all walks of life. Finally, 11 percent of all stories selected for attention dealt with a variety of economic themes. These overall figures conceal large individual variations. However, they do show that political stories were not the main focus of concern, even in an election year. Moreover, news consumption patterns do not mirror newspaper news presentation patterns. In the average newspaper or national newscast, roughly 60 percent of the stories deal with political matters, 22 percent with social issues, 14 percent with human interest affairs, and 4 percent with economic matters.

If the bulk of information presented by the mass media never registers in people's consciousness, one piece of the puzzle of large ignorance in the midst of plentiful information falls into place. Much available information is ignored from the start. Information scanning is done carelessly and unsystematically. When asked why they had missed specific stories, the panelists attributed nearly half of the misses to casual inattention. Even though they claimed to be quite interested in many of these stories, they seemed to take such carelessness for granted and did not appear to be disturbed by it. Casual omissions are compounded when one adds stories which are read or viewed without recall, and stories which are quickly forgotten. The end result of such news scanning behavior is that only a fraction of the information supply is incorporated into the average individual's knowledge base.

Information Selection

The attention arousal test provided us with data about information selection from an average array of news stories. We anticipated that recall would be richer in quantity and quality when the panelists were asked about prominently featured stories. These stories had been accorded top billing in newspapers and on television and had generally received repeated mentions. This was, indeed, the case. We found that overall, only 29 percent of the 275 prominent stories had been either missed or totally forgotten by the panelists, less than half the loss rate encountered for stories in general. However, another 48 percent of the stories were remembered only hazily. At best, our panelists could provide no more than three statements of facts about each. For 23 percent of the prominent stories, recall was ample so that four or more statements of facts or opinions could be recounted. There were wide variations among individuals in ability to recall story details. But even at best, loss of information was substantial.

Reasons for Information Rejection

What kinds of reasons do people give for neglecting information? There are many, ranging from reasons related to the individual and her or his life style, to the nature of the story or the mode of its presentation. Table 1 presents the aggregate picture, based on reasons given for neglecting prominent stories included in the story recall tests. The first column gives percentages for all reasons, the second omits the "Missed" category.

The most common reason why our panelists failed to pay attention was the excuse "I missed that one," without any apparent reason, other than haphazard scanning. Excluding this inadvertent behavior, what are the major conscious reasons for rejecting information? The biggest category is "no interest." It contains stories which give neither personal pleasure nor satisfy job related or civic needs. It also includes stories which contain disturbing information. Respondents may shut out stories about people they dislike intensely or about domestic and international situations which disturb them greatly, but which seem beyond control by them or by their political leaders. "Why worry about it when nothing can be done anyhow" expresses the feeling.

Table 1
Reasons for Rejecting News Stories*

	All	Selected
	(in percentages)	
Missed	47	—
Too Busy	6	12
No Interest	28	53
Redundant/Boring	2	3
Doubt Media	3	6
Doubt Story	1	2
Too Remote	10	18
Too Complex	3	5

*N for first column = 1493; N for second column = 793.

Dissonance avoidance is another reason for claiming that information lacks interest. For example, one respondent told us that he did not pay attention to Mideast news "because I tend to be more of an isolationist type . . . I feel that the United States is spread out too thin in too many areas, and they're sticking their nose into too much stuff that they don't belong in." However, dissonance is not necessarily a reason for rejecting information.[4] All our panelists were willing to pay attention to some dissonant messages.

The next largest rejection category beyond "no interest" involved information that was either too remote or too complex. Many stories dealing with foreign affairs fell into both of these categories. Several panelists, especially those with limited education, rejected stories about distant places automatically and claimed routinely that these stories were too complex. All panelists preferred simple stories and stories which readily fit into situations for which they had appropriate conceptual schemas available for information processing. Since much political information is contradictory, confusing, or unfamiliar, this was a much-used rejection category.[5]

Eight percent of the stories were rejected because of skepticism about the credibility of the story or the media. Political stories, in particular, fell into this category. For example, one respondent, who was an avid consumer of political news, was typical of the many panelists who ignored presidential messages. To him, such messsages were "mostly hogwash," and therefore not worthy of attention. Cynicism about campaign stories was widespread. Many respondents refused to pay attention to pronouncements by or about the candidates because they deemed them to be empty rhetoric.

Finally, 1% percent of the stories were rejected for what can be characterized as reasons of economy. People, particularly those with heavy family or job-related

obligations, or with heavy leisure hour commitments, lack time and inclination to cope with all the information available to them.[6] Therefore they cut out redundant or boring stories or ignore a breaking story until it is complete so that only the end result needs to be assimilated. Whenever all of these tactics prove insufficient to cope with the overload of information, days and even weeks may pass with no attention to news. People complain that they have been simply too busy or too tired or too ill to keep up. Once a particular time crunch has passed, they rarely bother to catch up with missed information.

Even when our panelists read a news story or watched it on television, this did not necessarily arouse sufficient attention to lead to information processing and ability to recall the story. The panelists frequently mentioned during interviews that they had read or watched news stories without really paying attention to them. Consequently they were left with no recollection of what had been read or viewed, even within minutes of concluding reading or viewing.

When asked why they went through the motions of monitoring news stories when they gained nothing from the process, some said that they did it merely as a matter of habit or from a sense of obligation that news monitoring is required from responsible citizens. Others alleged that their purpose was to look for cues to specific types of information which they wanted to monitor. To borrow a term from Harold Lasswell, this is the personal surveillance function.[7] The panelists scanned information to make sure that it contained nothing of predetermined importance to them. If nothing was found, their personalized orientation to the news was apparent from the common remark that "there was nothing in the news today."

Reasons for Information Acceptance

When people were asked why they had paid attention and remembered particular information which they could recall freely, what reasons did they give? And how do these reasons square with widely accepted theories about information acquisition? To answer these questions, we asked our panelists to tell us their reasons for remembering information produced in response to interview questions, allowing them to express these reasons extemporaneously. We also asked them to report reasons in their diaries, either by checking off a list of ten choices derived from pre-test data, or by writing out their own reasons. The results for story recall and diary questions are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Reasons for Processing News Stories*

	Recall	Diary
	(in percentages)	
Societal Importance	19	22
Interesting Story	15	32
Job Relevance	12	2
Personal Relevance	26	19
Emotional Appeal	20	22
Chance Reasons	1	2
Miscellaneous	7	1

*N for first column = 453; N for second column = 15,453.

The data in the table indicate that the primary reason for paying attention to news stories, according to our panelists self-assessment, was personal pleasure.

When we combine general interest in a story with emotional appeal and personal relevance, 61 percent of the test stories and 73 percent of the diary stories were remembered because they satisfied personal life needs. The information served no work life or civic life purposes. Societal significance of the story thus was a comparatively minor attraction, as was its usefulness for one's job.

A check of the substance of stories recorded in the diaries supports the accuracy of this self-assessment. The heaviest emphasis was on news containing human interest elements, such as stories about crimes and accidents, and stories relevant to personal life style, including health care, sports, entertainment, and gossip about assorted celebrities. This finding is compatible with Stephenson's play theory of mass media use which stresses that media use is largely recreational. It also accords with more general uses and gratifications theories which indicate that people pay attention to information that is instrumentally useful for them or that provides psychological gratifications.[8]

While psychological gratifications were the major reasons for selecting stories, other gratifications were sought as well. These included the need to act as a "good citizen," interested in important public affairs, and the need to seem well-informed, as well as the need to be aware of job relevant information. These needs led to attention to a substantial number of politically significant news stories so that the heavy emphasis on personal pleasure did not leave the respondents devoid of political knowledge. Our panelists also derived gratification from reducing their uncertainty about pending voting decisions. Accordingly, they increased their attention to election stories immediately prior to elections.

The comparatively limited taste of most panelists for political stories is best explained by their lukewarm interest in politics. Like most other Americans, they did not anticipate as many gratifications from political news stories as from other endeavors. Despite verbal professions of high interest in politics, they rarely expressed pure curiosity for political information, even though there were other knowledge areas where they sought information simply for the sake of knowing.

Whenever anticipated gratifications from attending to particular information did not materialize, our panelists were quite willing to stop reading or listening. This is further support for the notion that gratifications are an important motivating force for seeking information. For example, most panelists had eagerly awaited the presidential debates of 1976 and set aside time to watch them. But, when they found them boring, they stopped watching after a brief sampling.

A third set of theories which explain attention to news are cognitive balance theories. According to such theories, people deliberately choose the information to which they wish to expose themselves. Their choice is frequently guided by a desire to obtain only information which reeinforces their established beliefs, and to avoid information that is disturbing to their peace of mind.[9] Our study, provides limited support for such theories. As noted, disturbing information was often rejected, but this was by no means a consistent practice. And the distinct preference for reinforcing information did not mean that contradictory information was routinely ignored.

The main characteristic of the news selection and rejection process, which mitigates against systematic selectivity, is its casualness. Aside from the use of specialized journals by a few professionals on the panel, people used information primarily on a ready availability basis. They read the newspapers and magazines which were available in their environment, looking for whatever pleasing stories might be presented on a particular day. Searches for specific pre-selected stories were rare. Similarly, once the television set was turned on to a particular channel, panelists usually shunned the effort of turning the dial in search of preferred stories, except for a few favorite programs each week.

Finally, our findings are in accord with the general tenor of agenda-setting theories. Our panelists were influenced by the various cues to the importance of stories which the media supply. Panelists were more likely to expose themselves to frequently occurring stories, at least until saturation boredom had set in. And they showed some preference for front section stories. But, as recent investigations have shown, there are many conditions which modify the agenda-setting potential of the mass media. Our study sheds light on a number of these contingent conditions.

The dominant impressions conveyed by the array of reasons for story acceptance and for story rejection is that people want to pay attention, but assign a low priority to news consumption, compared to other activities. When they pay attention to news, stories must be interesting to be remembered, simple to understand, and believable. Their general civic significance is a relatively minor matter, though by no means unimportant. Whether a story will be deemed interesting depends partly on story substance and form and partly on timing and context. For example, election stories were found more interesting and remembered at a steeply higher rate (60 percent compared to 40 percent) when they were presented at high points of the campaign rather than at interludes. Overall, attention to political news suffices to make panelists aware of the bulk of important political stories. It is insufficient to make them genuinely knowledgeable about the main points of the majority of these stories.

Information Processing

How do people interact with the news stories to which they choose to pay attention? Schema theory, as postulated by cognitive psychologists, seems to provide a model which holds up well when applied to news stories of all types.[10] Explained very briefly, schema theory postulates that people select and process information to arrive at a meaningful simplified interpretation of the complexities of the world that surrounds them. From past experiences, they have distilled their own memory schemata about how the world operates. Faced with new information, people select what they wish to process, and then attempt to integrate it into the existing array of conceptualizations. The process begins with attention arousal and brief storage of lightly-processed information in short term memory. Thereafter, the reservoir of established constructs is searched in order to integrate the new information into appropriate existing schemas.

Adults are likely to have appropriate schemas for information prevalent in their culture or subculture because they have learned since childhood that this is essential for coping with their environment. Cues within the information indicate to the receiver which schema or schemas will be an appropriate storage place for the information. If new information seems worthwhile but does not fit into established schemas, three processing options are available. The information may be integrated by making extensive changes in established schemas; it may be processed into totally new schemas; or it may be discarded.

People employ three major interrelated processing strategies for storing information and for retrieving it from memory.[11] They are relatedness search, segmentation, and checking. Relatedness search involves looking for similar situations in the individual's array of schemas. It can be accomplished through straight matching, through matching of spin-offs from the story, or through the use of analogies. In straight matching, the new information is compared to information on the same subject already stored in memory, to check to what degree it corresponds to its counterpart. Since schemas, in addition to recording events, also

record sequences in the development of events, likely outcomes, as well as judgments about meanings and merits of the events, incoming information can be matched against these spin-offs from factual situations. When evaluations of new situations need to be made, the ability to draw analogies becomes valuable because analogies provide criteria by which to judge new events. People who have a narrow repertoire of schemas available for these various processing operations often find it difficult to assimilate the news.

Segmentation and checking are sub-routines which help in making successful relatedness searches. Segmentation involves breaking down a story into its component parts and performing relatedness searches for one or more of these parts. Processing of particular dimensions of the information may be easier than processing the information in its entirety. Checking is an attempt at improving the matches in relatedness searches beyond those that first come to mind. Evidence of checking comes to the fore when people think out loud, running through several possibilities. It appears to be a satisficing, rather than a maximizing operation, with people examining only a limited number of options, rather than running through the full gamut of possibilities.[12]

In the balance of this paper, I will describe the five types of schemas which were used routinely by our panelists to process current news in 1976. There were variations in the frequency with which each type was used, reflecting personal idiosyncracies, educational differences, and differences in political outlook and interest. Nonetheless, it is significant that the same limited array of basic schemas was common to news processing by all our respondents. The fact that these schemas have also been observed by other scholars who have investigated political culture and political belief systems provides additional support for the accuracy and general applicability of our findings.[13]

1. Cause and Effect Sequences

New information is likely to be noticed and incorporated into existing cognitions if it appears to be a predictable outcome of familiar current conditions. For instance, if one believes that unemployment produces crime, a story about rising crime is no surprise when published during times of high unemployment. The fact that the outcome should have been expecte even seems to take some of the sting out of undesirable events. New information which conforms to familiar causal sequencies may be incorporated, in more or less detail, into established schemas. Or, as happens more frequently, it may be discarded as "nothing new" and therefore not needed for incorporation into existing schemas.

Simple schemas

We encountered 3 types of cause and effect schemas. In simple cause and effect schemas, the linkage between cause and effect is direct. There are no multiple steps or circular reasoning. However, there may be multiple causes linked to a particular outcome. The following examples represent simple causal sequences. Stories about tax increases were frequently processed as the predictable direct results of excessive spending by government. Pollution stories were integrated as the inevitable outcome of high industrialization. Poor schools were linked to inadequate spending for public education. All of these stories were regarded as neither novel nor surprising, and usually worth only limited attention.

Our panelists rarely saw individuals as the cause of political problems reported in the news. Rather, they blamed circumstances beyond people's control. The "system" was at fault, or the world had become too complex for even the best and the brightest to cope with its ills successfully. This type of fatalism creates feelings that nothing can be done to remedy political ills permanently. It becomes a

disincentive for paying close attention to tales about the perennial ills of the political system. Instead, such stories are met with expressions of resignation like the rhetorical query "what else is new?"

Given this attitude, stories which reported improvements in long-standing political problems received attention from most of our panelists because they were perceived as deviations from the expected. Such stories were used either to modify existing schemas -- most people seemed quite willing to undertake occasional modifications -- or they were labelled and rejected as unbelievable and the established schema was reaffirmed. Reasons for questioning credibility ranged from reservations about the source of the story, to doubts about the accuracy of the media, to assertions that past experience indicated that the story must be incorrect or merely a temporary deviation, soon to be corrected.

At times, our panelists made obviously faulty causal connections or searched unsuccessfully for causal explanations of political stories which had caught their attention. When the causes were elusive, they expressed disappointment. "I wish I knew-- it baffles me -- I can't make heads or tails out of this" were common expressions which indicated that the respondent could not readily find an appropriate schema to make the story part of a meaningful cause and effect sequence. If no appropriate schemas could ultimately be found, such stories were more readily forgotten than more familiar tales, as judged by tests of long-range memory.[14]

Projections to the Future

Another common form of cause and effect reasoning is the attempt to project current events covered by news stories to their future, as yet unrealized, consequences. The implied question then is "what consequences will this event have in the future?" This is different from ordinary effect-cause linkage where one accounts for an effect that has already happened by linking it to a cause.

An example of projection was one panelist's prediction that stories about the strong primary election winning streak of a particular presidential candidate indicated that he would be able to unify the party even before the convention. Another example was the assertion that stories which show a candidate to be partial to particular groups portend that he will place the interests of these groups above the general interest. Hence Senator Jackson's affinity for Jewish causes meant that he would be prone to favor these causes unduly.

Projection may also be used as a technique to bring discrepant information into alignment with existing schemas. For example, stories contradicting the schema that social conditions make continuous rises in the crime rate inevitable were brought into line by pointing out that the deviant trends would be reversed in the near future. The current trends were construed as temporary aberrations.

Complex Schemas

While simple cause and effect linkages were quite common in story processing, complex cause and effect linkages were rare. The ratio averaged 10 to 1. An example of complex cause and effect linkage was one panelist's remark that stories about rising crime rates should be interpreted as evidence of the bankruptcy of liberal philosophies. The complex reasoning leading to this particular linkage was that anti-business policies generated by liberals produce unemployment. In turn, unemployment produces crime because it leaves people idle and vulnerable to temptations to enrich themselves through crime or to take out their frustrations on society. Thus the causal chain went from liberalism to anti-business philosophy to unemployment to rising crime.

Another type of complex reasoning is acknowledgment of the obvious cause and effect linkage which explains a particular story and indicates how it should be stored, followed by an indication that there are real or ancillary reasons beyond the

obvious reasons. A story about reassigning teachers in Chicago in order to racially integrate faculties illustrates searching beyond obvious reasons. Several respondents alleged that Chicago school authorities actually were opposed to teacher integration. They perceived the story as involving the status of teachers' unions in Chicago, rather than integration policy. In their view, the reassignment was intended to destroy the power of unions by destroying their control over teacher assignments.

The attempt to distinguish instrumental and symbolic aspects of stories is demonstrated by one respondent's remark that he paid attention to news about Illinois Senator Stevenson's endorsement of a local Chicago Congressman because it was Stevenson's "Declaration of Independence." Rather than merely proclaiming support for a fellow politician, the respondent thought that Stevenson was signaling Mayor Daley that he was willing to defy the mayor who had endorsed a different candidate.

2. Person Judgments

News stories frequently involve the activities of various types of individuals, many of them easily recognizable as members of distinct demographic groups. Such stories could be readily processed because our panelists had general schema about human behavior as it is and as it ought to be, and specific schema about actual and ideal behavior of various groups and particular individuals and the criteria by which their behavior ought to be evaluated. In the process of reacting to stories, the panelists often revealed their own implicit personality theories about the meanings to be attributed to particular human characteristics and behaviors.[15]

Criteria for Judgment

When confronted with stories about various individuals, our panelists seemed to ask themselves first of all whether or not they were familiar with the person in question or knew someone similar to her or him. Stories about unfamiliar individuals and types of people normally were ignored or quickly forgotten. Such behavior indicates that the processing system has powerful screens which sharply reduce the rate of new learning while keeping individuals from being overwhelmed by new information. However, new learning and schema development do take place if fresh faces in news stories reflect situations of great interest or prominence. For instance, new schemas may be formed for important characters in sensational discoveries or brutal crimes or for new rising stars in the spectrum of presidential hopefuls.

Whenever the story subjects were familiar persons or types of persons, the panelists tried to square the newly reported action with their previous impressions of these people. If current action conformed to past activities or likely behaviors, it was treated as confirmation of existing schemas. In such cases, the story was often described as "nothing new" and was given slight attention. Stories indicating that familiar individual's current actions contradicted established schemas were more likely to lead to extensive processing. Expressions of surprise were followed by one of three strategies: attempts to interpret the story in ways that would make it conform after all or, if this proved impossible, rejection of the story or alteration of the established schemas. The first of these strategies was the most common, followed, in order, by the other two. If the persons involved in prominent stories were unfamiliar, attempts were made to find similarities between the newcomers and familiar characters. These similarities could then be used to develop new schemas that harmonized with existing ones.

Items that were commonly included in person schemas were the behaviors and accomplishments ascribed to the person, the person's past history, physical

appearance, verbal and nonverbal characteristics and evaluations of the person by the observer and other parties. Some of the characteristics included in schemas were quite trivial. For instance, one respondent reported watching a telecast to capture "the announcers' comments and the little tidbits . . . stupid little things like Jimmy Carter's the first presidential nominee to . . . wear his hair covering the tops of his ears . . . you know, junky things . . . little human interest things."

When processing stories about people, judgments about their honesty were most frequent. In part this was true because honesty was deemed to be a crucial element to determine whether to take messages conveyed by individuals seriously. Honesty was assessed in a variety of ways. If physical appearance could be judged, people were described as having or lacking "an honest look." Avoidance of eye contact was universally interpreted as a sign of dishonesty whereas a straight look into the eye and firm, unhesitating responses were interpreted as evidence of honesty. Aside from these signs, our panelist found it difficult to articulate the specific criteria by which they gauged an honest look. Facial expression, body stance and movement, as well as dress and grooming, all seemed to play a part. Judgments about who looked honest and who did not were surprisingly uniform, despite the difficulty of articulating criteria.

Honesty was also assessed by scrutinizing a person's pronouncements for consistency. If panelists' schemas allowed them to become aware of inconsistencies between pronouncements or between words and actions, they generally interpreted it as a sign of dishonesty or lack of steadfastness. Most person judgment schemas apparently did not include the idea that inconsistencies might involve rational readjustments to changing conditions. Inconsistencies between the panelists' own schemas of the subjects and the subjects' self-judgments also raised the issue of dishonesty. For example, several panelists interpreted stories about Jimmy Carter's pledge that he would never lie to the public as duplicity. Carter's statement ran counter to their schemas about the truthfulness to be expected from politicians.

Instead of attempting to make their own judgments, some panelists routinely accepted personality judgments made by third parties and conveyed through the media or through interpersonal discussion. People with low esteem of their capacity to make sound judgments in general were most likely to adopt this strategy in processing news about people. A majority of the women fell into that group. Panelists were also willing to accept third party judgments by persons whom they considered to be experts in judging particular types of people. For instance, one of the panelists always deferred to the judgment of her father when it came to appraising politicians because she felt that he was paying attention to political information while she was ignoring it.

General Human Behavior Schemas

Our panelists had well-formed schemas about behaviors to be expected from people in general, and about the specific behaviors that one ought to anticipate from certain population groups. When stories indicated that people had behaved in the expected fashion, the stories were treated as confirmation of existing schemas. To most panelists, they were not news in that case because it is only news when man bites dog, not the reverse. Expected behaviors included such things as doing favors for your friends and relatives, denying mistakes, and indulging one's weaknesses. Stories involving such behaviors merely became transient supporting footnotes to established schemas about typical behaviors of homo sapiens.

Human behavior schemas also included ideas about the impact of various social settings on people's behavior. For instance, many panelists shared the view that people with time on their hands are apt to engage in unorthodox activities. Among other things, this idea made them expect that protest activities would be

carried on largely by young, single people who had not yet become full-fledged members of the labor force.

Besides making it easy for people to absorb new information into their established knowledge structures, human behavior schemas also permit projections beyond the specific information supplied by news stories. If a news story reports, for instance, that a group of citizens have demonstrated against off-shore oil explorations, general schemas about human nature supply information about other characteristics that members of the group are likely to exhibit. Our panelists were quite deliberate about ascribing schema characteristics to all members of the same group. As one panelist put it when explaining why she viewed all politicians as dishonest: "And then, if this person who you voted for is convicted of some serious offense . . . to me it goes off onto all other politicians. After the events of the past few years, I have a real distrust of politicians. I really don't believe what they are saying." No exceptions, here; the condemnation was sweeping and all-encompassing.

Population Subgroups

Our panelists also had a wide repertoire of schemas to process stories about the behavior of population subgroups. Such groups could be as narrow as specific types of college students or as broad as ethnic, religious, or occupational groups. Stories about student rowdyism, ethnic or religious lobbying or business corruption were readily incorporated into these schemas. To use just one example, stories about the use of bribes by Lockheed officials in their conduct of business evoked this comment: "It's the kind of thing I think goes on a lot. Business is a lot of wheeling-dealing, under-the-table sort of politics . . . it will keep on going. It's just a human way of doing things." Obviously, this is a schema that goes beyond characterizing current behavior by a specific business. It projects the permanent continuance of a characteristic behavior by a class of people because that behavior is deemed an unchangeable feature of the group in question.

One subgroup for which our panelists had distinct schemas consists of politicians, in and out of office. Politicians were perceived by most panelists as a unique breed — power-hungry, double-dealing, unscrupulous. In the words of one panelist: "To me a public official is a different kind of person from what, like I am . . . It's involved with a need for power." The comment that "In politics, dirty tricks don't really upset me" was typical. Reprehensible conduct elicited no indignation. Just as one would expect a boxer or a wrestler to inflict bodily injury on his opponent, so one expects that many politicians will double-deal, betray, and engage in various forms of corruption. They also will be inordinately concerned with making headlines and with putting the desire for reelection above principled behavior. A stock phrase, repeated in almost identical wording was "This is typical of politicians . . I expect something like that . . . I just take it sort of matter of fact that that's what politicians do."

The ability to win elections was widely used as a criterion to judge politicians' merits. Victory was deemed to reflect the candidate's appeal to the general public whose judgments were respected. Stories about election victories, accordingly, were processed as evidence that the winners were capable. Winners then were usually credited with other desirable qualities which are part of the schema about the nature of capable political candidates. Several panelists expressed unease about judging candidates on the basis of their election successes, or even on the basis of personality. But they indicated that they lacked schemas to judge what kinds of policy proposals should be part and parcel of their conceptions of the good candidate. Hence they felt forced to judge candidates by the available schema. "It has to get down to personalities, I guess. O.K. it's important in running

the country, but it's not really the most important thing. It should be how he'll react to various situations."

After exposure to a lot of news about political candidates, most panelists showed signs of being sated. They skipped large numbers of political stories as "part of the same old stuff." There was nothing new, nothing worthy of additional close attention. This saturation boredom reaction was also noted for other stories that covered familiar themes over long periods of time. In fact, a high percentage of all stories cover familiar themes through new examples and strain the capacity of their audiences to remain interested and attentive.

Aside from general notions about the nature and behavior of politicians in and out of office, people have, of course, schemas for particular politicians. To keep them predominantly favorable or unfavorable, as the case may be, our panelists were likely to process contradictory news to bring it into line with their preferred evaluation. Many schemas about particular politicians appeared to be quite sparse. Judging from the panelists' recall, they could be easily condensed into one line or even one-word commentaries: "Would you buy a used car from him?" "He's a has-been" "a klutz," "a racist." Many of these brief characterizations bear close resemblance to the stereotypes which television commentators so frequently develop for political figures.

3. Institution Judgments

Criteria for Judgment

Stories about governmental action generally are processed through schemas about the quality that may be expected from governmental performance. They are rarely processed through schemas about the proper scope for governmental activities, the necessity for action, or the level of government that ought to be involved.[16]

Our panelists had distinct schemas about the norms of behavior by which political institutions should be judged. They generally paid attention to stories which related to these norms positively or negatively.[17] Prominent among these norms is fairness. For example, one panelist used the fairness angle to process a story about a U.S. veto against U.N. membership for the Palestine Liberation Association. "I disagree with the decision," she said. "It's unfair. I think the Arabs have been getting screwed for a long time. I think that's a mistake we made and we should rectify it." Consistency is another common norm. Our panelists believed that governmental action should be consistent. Stories that recorded inconsistencies often were noted and interpreted as evidence of undesirable governmental behavior.

The degree of public approval is another criterion that was frequently employed to assess the merits or strengths of public institutions and programs. Stories about wide public support of institutions and policies tended to receive attention and produced favorable evaluations of the institutions in question. The widespread interest in knowing what the public approves or condemns is also reflected in avid attention to stories reporting public opinion poll results. Failure to win substantial public endorsement generally was equated with weakness and often lack of merit. Thus a story that an anti-abortion candidate had received few votes in the Massachusetts primary was interpreted by several panelists -- falsely, as it turned out -- as general weakness of the anti-abortion movement.

Stories about governmental performance were also commonly evaluated by casting them into historical or circumstantial perspectives. For instance, 1976 election events and candidates were compared to their historical counterparts or evaluated in light of the political circumstances in 1976. Stories about the level of

national expenditures were assessed in light of the gross national product. From that perspective, as one panelist put it, "we're not going overboard with defense spending like all these critics and people are saying." A story about the ouster of a civilian government in Argentina, placed into historical perspective, turned out to be a routine event. "In light of Argentine history and the history of many other South American republics, it's, I suppose, almost inevitable when things go badly -- inflation and economic troubles that Argentina has been through -- that the military or at least the right wing groups would step in."

General Behavior Schemas

When it came to insights into the actual modus operandi of government, most of our panelists seemed to have only very hazy ideas. They did not know how governmental bodies are set up to perform their duties or how their activities are shaped by internal and external political pressures. Therefore, stories about governmental activities could not be analyzed in terms of their correspondence to normal behavior by such bodies.[18]

Our panelists did have schemas about the scope of activities which governments ought to pursue. These schemas revealed the characteristic split between ideological and operational outlooks described in Free and Cantril's study of The Political Beliefs of Americans.[19] Ideologically, most panelists did not want government to do any more than necessary. But operationally "necessary" was broadly defined as anything that private institutions cannot do well or have failed to do. When stories disclosed serious social problems, the panelists mentioned the need for government intervention for a broad array of problems.

Most panelists were unable to detect missing information in stories about governmental action. To spot missing information, respondents must have ample schemas from which they can draw information normally associated with such stories, or logically following from the information supplied in the story. Most panelists lacked such well-rounded schemas about governmental operations. It was an exception, for instance, when one politically astute panelist noted that a story about limitations on campaign spending mentioned only the comparatively small number of groups whose contributions were to be kept in check. It failed to point out that the bulk of individuals and social groups remained unshackled.

The most constant element in processing stories about governmental activities was the assumption that government is inefficient. Our panelists, especially those who had had direct experience with governmental activities, expected government bureaucracies -- all bureaucracies for that matter, at home and abroad -- to be slow, bogged down in senseless red tape, and wasteful of human and material resources. The post-office was mentioned frequently as the proto-type of inefficient behavior. When stories raised questions about the expediency of a government take-over of ailing industries, such as oil or steel, the inefficiency of the post-office was likely to be cited as a yardstick for appraising such plans. Inefficiencies generally were viewed as the inescapable results of the complexity of the problems with which governments are forced to deal.[20] They were not ascribed to the incapacity of government personnel. One panelist, made a typical excuse for the failure of governmental institutions to deal with problems by commenting: "It must be very hard to come to some solution and get the job done and all that without causing other problems; otherwise somebody would have come up with something."

As part of the notion of inefficiency, bureaucracies were deemed incapable of appropriate foresight and planning. Various disasters were interpreted as evidence of this tragic inability. A panelist's comment following a story about the collapse of a major dam is illustrative: "As usual, after a disaster happens, the

government went out and started making regulations . . . I remember thinking at that time that it's always some human mistake that screws things up."

In foreign policy, governmental action was generally expected to be ineffectual. Hence when stories about retreats or inaction in the face of adverse developments were published, our panelists characterized them as expected behavior. For instance, stories about failure to object to Cuba's sending of troops into Angola were interpreted as evidence of characteristically weak foreign policy stands.

Stories about governmental corruption were also taken in stride. Our panelists regarded corruption as a widespread, inevitable concomitant of power in public and private institutions. They shared Lord Acton's view that those who become too powerful are easily corrupted. But corruption was regarded as an occupational hazard, rather than the result of evil intentions. There was therefore, almost more pity for the fallen sinners than contempt for their moral weaknesses and sins.[21]

As political observers have pointed out, a belief that many politicians are corrupt is not the same as a belief that the political system is corrupt.[22] Our panelists were supportive of the American political system and viewed it as working for the public's welfare. They thought that it should be retained and only changed incrementally, not radically. Therefore, stories about political movements designed to overturn "the American way" and stories about attempts to bring about political change outside normal political channels generally received attention and negative comment. Reports about government action to stop protesters elicited approval.

4. Cultural Norms as Guidelines

Besides schemas about actual behaviors of people and institutions, and the manner in which these behaviors ought to be carried out and judged, our panelists also had schemas reflecting generalized norms of behavior that ought to be expected from people and institutions. These schemas can be viewed as stock judgments about people and institutions based on widely disseminated cultural norms.

One of these schemas relates to the universal benefits of education. The notion that education is the key to a better life is, as Robert Lane has pointed out, "the humanistic 'religion' of the West."[23] Since education leads to better jobs, better citizenship and reduced asocial behavior, most of our panelists believed that society ought to supply all members of the public with an ample array of educational facilities. Stories related to public education readily captured attention and were always evaluated from the perspective that the best type of education ought to be provided to the largest possible clientele.

Yet another stock belief used in processing the news is that democracy is the best form of government and that governments and people ought to behave democratically. Stories raising issues about democratic behavior were processed accordingly. However, there were substantial variations among the panelists in determining that specific behaviors met democratic criteria.[24] For example, there was general agreement that a democratic society ought to encourage the expression of diverse views, but little consensus on whether this applies to expressions of radically different political philosophies or even severe criticism of governmental policies.

By contrast, our panelists' schemas about what constitutes appropriate behavior for the good citizen were surprisingly similar. These schemas were rarely used for story processing because stories raising issues about good citizenship were scarce. But they frequently came to the fore when people appraised their own

information-seeking behavior. Schemas about good citizens invariably show them voting in elections, based on their own well-informed decisions. As Robert Lane has described this schema for his sample of blue-collar workers, "in Eastport, the common man asserts his independence, asserts that he would not, even to relieve his ignorance, consult anyone in particular about the issues and candidates in an election — but would rather make up his own mind."[25] To make well-informed decisions requires devoting time to election news at some point during the electoral contest. All of our panelists reported paying attention to election news stories spurred by this sense of civic duty to reach their own decisions.

Good citizens also keep abreast of other important national and local political issues. The fact that these issues may be beyond their capacity to understand is not considered a valid excuse for ignoring them.[26] Paying attention to news includes paying attention to public messages from political leaders, even if these messages are boring. It does not, however, include acquiring "school knowledge," such as remembering the length of a senatorial or judicial term. Good citizens perform their civic duties out of a sense of genuine concern, rather than forced duty.

Our panelists expressed guilt whenever they realized that they had missed important political stories, thereby running afoul of their own conceptions of good citizenship.[27] But this feeling did not lead to major improvements in subsequent attention to news. One panelist, who had commented that keeping abreast of election news "shouldn't really be a duty; you should want to do it'" explained the gap between ideal behavior norms and actual behavior. She said: "I don't think you can force a person to take a deep interest in something that they're not interested in."

5. Human Interest and Empathy

One of the most potent incentives to pay attention to news stories is the desire to learn about the personal life, joys, tragedies, wrong and right-doings of other people, particularly those in high places or in familiar settings. Several schemas appear to be involved. One relates to self-perception. Our panelists seemed to ask themselves: "Is the situation depicted in the news story similar to my direct or vicarious experiences, or similar to what I would do, under the circumstances? A second, more general schema, seems to contain a collection of miscellaneous events, all of them wrenching the observer's emotions. Finally, our panelists tended to be alert to stories of all kinds which had human interest appeal because they personally knew the people involved in the story or because they were familiar with the site of the story.

For instance, in response to a tornado news story, one respondent remembered only the scars left in familiar areas. Said he: "when I see things on TV of places I've been to, it means more to me." A story about former first lady Pat Nixon's stroke received attention because it involved a familiar person and evoked sympathy. More general schemas of concern were involved in processing a story about a mother and her children killed in Ireland (with the political aspects of the story forgotten), a Guatemalan earthquake ("I feel very sorry and want to help,") and expressions of sympathy for victims and their families in stories about major disasters. Stories processed for their direct personal relevance involved human interrest information germane to the panelists' jobs, or to their daily personal life and leisure activities, or stories that they perceived as worth telling to interested family members, friends, and associates.

Conclusions

What major conclusions emerge from this study of news processing, and what is their significance for the political process. Put very briefly: Assuming that our panelists' news processing behavior is typical, the search for political information is not conducted very diligently, despite protestations of interest and duty. As a result, the bulk of political news is never processed at all. When processing takes place, news is shaped to satisfy the individual's needs which, in turn, are shaped by past and present experiences and by personality factors. News consumers process news when they are able to link it to established schemas and regard it as sufficiently novel so that it will enrich their previously stored conceptions and examples. Since much of the news consists of minor variations on familiar themes, it does not make a significant impact on established schemas and much of it is quickly forgotten, if it is stored at all.

The types of schemas used for processing information are quite limited in the perspectives on the world that they contain. But they are adequate for extracting some meaning from most domestic news stories. By contrast, most panelists were unable to deal adequately with foreign news. The ability to process news and retrieve it appeared to be directly linked to the richness of the schemas on which each respondent could draw. The rich were getting richer, while the poor remained poor.

The impact of these processing patterns on political life is positive as well as negative, if one subscribes to the ideal of the well-informed citizen. On the positive side, despite their haphazard news search and processing behavior, our panelists managed to absorb sufficient information to be aware of a large number of current issues. Although they did not use their abilities to the fullest, all panelists had the basic schemas and processing skills to integrate complex current news into their thinking. All had the desire to keep informed, reinforced by a sense of duty. Their casual style of attention to news served to steel them against information overloads so characteristic of twentieth century democracies.

On the negative side, much important information was missed and with it the opportunity for forming new and richer schemas. Processing tended to reinforce existing stereotypes, rather than producing new outlooks.[28] The processing cues supplied by the media were powerful, giving the media more influence over people's schema than may be desirable. Despite these drawbacks, there is ground for optimism. Our analysis shows that people know how to cope with information overload; that they balance a healthy respect for their own pleasures with moderate willingness to perform their civic duties; and that they have learned to extract essential kernels of information from news stories, while discarding much of the chaff. V.O. Key's views that the electorate deserves credit for more savvy than meets the eye are not so far off the mark, after all.[29]

Notes

1. The diary was kept for a minimum of five days each week. Stories were recorded several hours after exposure to news to eliminate those stories which had left only fleeting memory traces. If respondents had nothing to report for a particular day, they could indicate this on the diary forms. Recorded diary stories ranged from 359 to 969 per person. Newspaper news stories were reported most frequently, with only a small sprinkling of editorials or columns. Television news stories came next. Documentaries and special broadcasts were rarely mentioned. Sources other than newspapers or television were rarely mentioned in the diaries.

2. For more details on panel selection see Doris A. Graber, Crime News and the Public, New York: Praeger, 1980, pp. 7-9. Contact with the 200 respondents represented an 80 percent success rate in reaching voters identified from the voting roster. Of the 200 registrants who were contacted, 84 percent agreed to participate in the study, following the filter interview.

3. Data analysis has shown that schema theory, borrowed from cognitive psychology, provides an excellent framework for analysis of political information processing. A preliminary report on these findings is presented in Doris A. Graber, "Strategies for Processing Political Information," a paper presented at the 1982 meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association.

4. Several studies have found low or nonsignificant relationships between recall of message-arguments and attitudinal acceptance of the advocated message. Richard M. Perloff and Timothy C. Brock. "And Thinking Makes So: Cognitive Responses in Persuasion," pp. 67-99 in Michael E. Roloff and Gerald R. Miller, Persuasion: New Directions in Theory and Research, Beverly Hills: Sage, 1980, p. 75.

5. Robert E. Lane, in Political Ideology: Why the American Common Man Believes What He Does. New York: Free Press, 1962, reports that his panelists also found much of the political information confusing. See p. 33 ff.

6. As Lane (as cited in note 5, p.27) put it "The problem is, simply, the capacity of the mind to receive and deal with a wide variety of stimuli, most of which require some kind of response." Lane cites Freud to the effect that "Protection against stimuli is an almost more important function for the living organism than reception of stimuli."

7. Harold D. Lasswell, "The Structure and Function of Communication in Society," in Wilbur Schramm, ed., Mass Communications. Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1949, p. 103.

8. William Stephenson, The Play Theory of Mass Communication. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967. For discussions of uses and gratifications theories, see Charles A. Atkins, "Instrumental Utilities and Information Seeking," in New Models of Mass Communication Research, Peter Clarke, ed., Beverly Hills: Sage, 1973, pp. 205-242; and Lee B. Becker, "Two Tests of Media Gratifications: Watergate and the 1974 Election," Journalism Quarterly 53 (Spring 1976): 28-33.

9. A brief exposition of these theories is contained in Lewis Donohew and Philip Palmgreen, "A Reappraisal of Dissonance and the Selective Exposure Hypothesis," Journalism Quarterly, 48 (Autumn 1971): 412-420.

10. Schema theory is discussed in the following studies: Nancy Cantor and John F. Kihlstrom, eds., Personality, Cognition, and Social Interaction, Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1981; Roy Lachman and Janet L. Lachman, Cognitive Psychology and Information Processing: An Introduction, Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1979; P.H. Lindsay and D.A. Norman, Human Information Processing, New York: Academic Press, 1977; R. Schank and R.P. Abelson, Scripts, Plans, Goals, and Understanding: An Inquiry Into Human Knowledge Structure, Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1977; Constance Scheerer, ed. Cognition: Theory, Research, Promise. New York: Harper and Row, 1964.

11. Jonathan Baron, "Intelligence and General Strategies," p. 429 in Scheerer, cited in note 10.

12. The terms 'satisficing' and 'maximizing' have been borrowed from Herbert Simon, Models of Man, New York: Wiley,1957.

13. See, for example, Lane, as cited in note 5, Karl A. Lamb, As Orange Goes: Twelve California Families and the Future of American Politics. New York: Norton, 1974; and Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, Middletown in Transition: A Study in Cultural Conflicts. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1937.

14. Respondents were tested on their ability to recall stories after long intervals, ranging from 3 to 9 months.

15. For similar findings, see Cantor and Kihlstrom, as cited in note 10, p. 47.

16. See Lane, as cited in note 5, p. 192, for similar observations.

17. For a discussion of socially shared reference scales, see W. Lance Bennett, "Perception and Cognition: An Information-Processing Framework for Politics," pp. 69-193 in Samuel L. Long, editor, The Handbook of Political Behavior, vol. 1, New York: Plenum Press, 1981, p. 71.

18. See Lane, as cited in note 5, p. 146, for similar observations.

19. Lloyd A. Free and Hadley Cantril, The Political Beliefs of Americans. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1968.

20. See Lane, as cited in note 5, p. 420, for similar observations.

21. See Lane, as cited in note 5, p. 170, for similar observations.

22. See for example, Lee Sigelman, "The Presidency: What Crisis of Confidence?" in Doris A. Graber, ed., The President and the Public. Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1982.

23. Lane, as cited in note 5, p. 325.

24. For similar observations see Robert D. Putnam, The Beliefs of Politicians: Ideology, Conflict, and Democracy in Britain and Italy. New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1973.

25. Lane, as cited in note 5, p. 19.

26. See Lane, as cited in note 5, p. 35, for similar observations.

27. See Lane, as cited in note 5, pp. 33-34 for similar observations.

28. Bennett, as cited in note 17, p. 116.

29. V.O. Key,Jr., with Milton Cummings, The Responsible Electorate. New York: Vintage, 1968.